

BALTIC DEFENCE CO-OPERATION





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Estonian Ministry of Defence

Tallinn 2002

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FOREWORD

Baltic defence co-operation and the projects entailed are of invaluable importance to Estonia. The four primary projects developed in this framework, the Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT), the Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON), the Baltic Air Surveillance Network (BALTNET) and the Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL), have evolved into functioning and fundamental elements of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian defence forces. They demonstrate the will and ability of the Baltic states to co-operate in the fields of security and defence, while they also serve the purpose of enhancing national readiness and defence capabilities. These projects are the first joint military ventures in the Baltic states. Very often, they stand out as the flagship of our defence systems, demonstrating our ability to co-operate with different partners in various fields of military affairs.

While the history of these military projects is comparatively short, the cohesive that binds the co-operation is strong. Growth in scope, new dimensions in thinking, and daily co-operation are obvious. An increasingly sophisticated concept of the Baltic military co-operation projects is easily perceptible.

Currently, one of the most important aspects of the projects is the process of Baltification: the gradual increase in responsibility of the Baltic states for the management, organisation, training, support and funding of the projects. I am proud to announce that we are moving markedly toward being ready to run the projects from our own resources. Toward this goal, several milestones have already been passed, including the submission and approval of long-term development plans for each of the projects. The time frame in which the projects are completely handed over to the Baltic states will depend on a number of factors, not least of which is the availability of suitable Baltic staff.

Substantial international support from the onset of the projects has ensured the high quality of work carried out within the Baltic military co-operation framework. In full recognition of the extraordinary and immeasurable contributions made by the supporting states, the Baltic states have developed their own management system for administration of the projects. Even beyond the Baltification process, the Baltic states will attribute great importance to expertise from supporting states.



Estonia has, in all areas, come a long way in just ten short years. In addition to contributing and committing resources to the security of the Baltic Sea region, we offer to share the experience that we have gained from the Baltic military co-operation projects to states that are perhaps in a position similar to where the Baltic states found themselves a decade ago, having to build their national defence from the very ground up.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are standing on the NATO threshold. This position is not accidental nor is it surprising – we have worked hard to achieve this goal. Although the Alliance evaluates each of the Baltic countries separately, it remains common practice to view the Baltic states as one region with closely co-operating defence structures. From their inception, the Baltic military co-operation projects have operated according to NATO standards and have used English as the official language. The Baltic military projects contribute to the prospects and the process of acceding NATO, and help overcome, even avoid, some of the problems faced in the Alliance's last wave of accession.

The three Baltic states share a sense of unity, the knowing that together we are stronger and more flexible. When needed, we give each other a supporting hand. A stronger element of one partner's defence structure also strengthens the other partners. Such assistance and co-operation works toward building up balanced and well-calculated defence capabilities.

Changes on the world arena over the past year only emphasise the need for partners to share a common way of thinking and operating in order to work effectively. The Baltic military co-operation projects have created a unique pool of international experience, achieved through co-operation between NATO member states and non-aligned countries with similar defence traditions. Indeed, the Baltic military projects are one tangible example of the co-operation so necessary in this new world.

Let this publication provide insight to the many steps being taken toward achieving our common goals on this challenging road to a more secure future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jüri Luik'.

Jüri Luik
Minister of Defence
Republic of Estonia



BALTIC MILITARY CO-OPERATION

Soon after re-gaining national independence in 1991, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania initiated regular meetings on defence matters. In February 1994, the first combined Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian military exercise took place in southern Estonia. The initiative to establish the first Baltic military project – the Baltic Battalion – dates back to 1993-94. The commanders of the defence forces of the three countries introduced the idea, which soon found extensive support (both locally and abroad) from Western states and at home. Due to the initial success, other joint projects have followed, based on the same founding concept as that of the Baltic Battalion. Today, the broad range of defence-related co-operation between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania has become a key part of the defence structures, and continues to strengthen the forces themselves. While the list includes several projects and initiatives, here we will focus primarily on the four long-term military projects:

- **Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT)** - Infantry battalion for participation in international peace support operations;
- **Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON)** - Naval force with mine countermeasures capabilities;
- **Baltic Air-surveillance Network (BALTNET)** - Air-surveillance information system;
- **Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL)** - Joint military educational institution for training senior staff officers and civil servants.

The Baltic military projects, cultivated by the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative, are unique in the broad international support and assistance they have received. States supporting the various projects include both NATO, member states and non-aligned countries.

Supporting States

Belgium	Netherlands
Denmark	Norway
Finland	Poland
France	Sweden
Germany	Switzerland
Iceland	United Kingdom
	United States of America

Baltic military co-operation projects have played a major role in developing the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian defence structures in accordance with the traditions and procedures of Western countries. The projects provide Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with experience in international co-operation and consensus building, and give the defence forces of the three states more visibility at home and abroad.

Baltic military co-operation projects have been carefully designed to develop capabilities of the Baltic states' defence forces and to make them interoperable with NATO. BALTBAT and the national battalions that are under development provide the alliance rapid reaction and Peace Support Operations (PSO) capabilities; BALTNET gives a complete air-surveillance picture of the region; BALTRON handles



mine-countermeasures and PSO capabilities; and the Baltic Defence College gives the Baltic officer corps a common background in line with NATO standards.

By applying standards equivalent to those used in NATO and the PfP framework, the Baltic states are also creating common standards for use within the Baltic region. The projects are led by permanent multinational staffs, which follow NATO procedures and formats to the greatest extent possible; English is the official working and command language for all of the projects.

The role of the projects in the professional development of the defence structures is not limited to the projects themselves. Participant officers are rotated within the national defence forces, thereby spreading the skills and experience gained from the projects to the national structures. This aspect of training applies on all levels involved in project management, implementation and operation. At the same time, the defence ministries gain expertise in international co-operation and, more specifically, on how to run co-operation programmes and multilateral projects.

The Estonian Ministry of Defence views Baltic defence co-operation projects as one of the major tools for developing and facilitating closer co-operation with NATO structures.

Management, Co-ordination and International Support

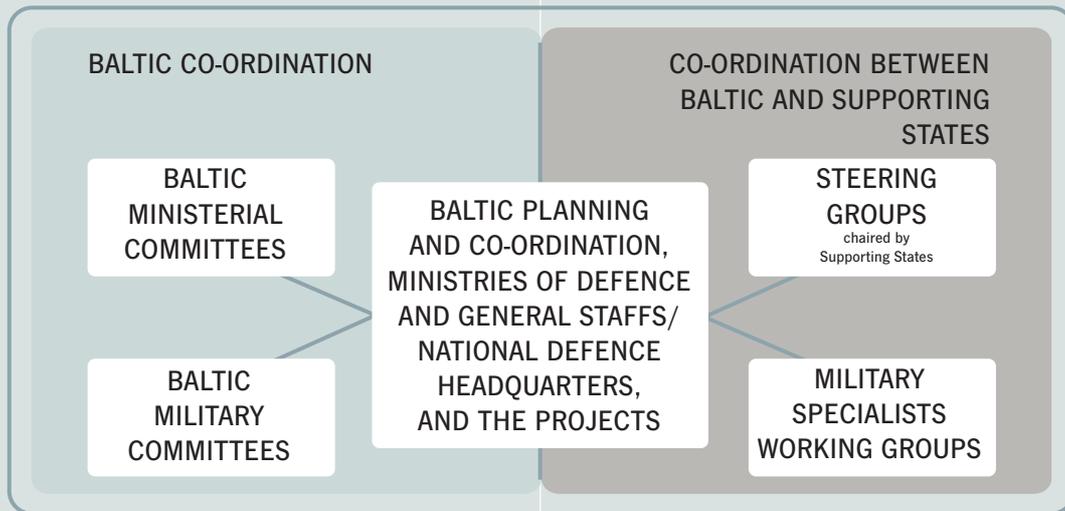
A number of international agreements and administrative arrangements have been concluded between the various authorities of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to ensure the proper legal and administrative framework for such projects. International agreements lay out the political and

legal setting for the establishment of the projects and the conduct and management of activities, while the administrative arrangements outline the administration and shared responsibilities. The international support rendered to the projects is also based on the administrative arrangements, which set the terms of co-operation, responsibilities in the projects, and project co-ordination management.



Although the Baltic states have already begun the Baltification process with the aim of gradually increasing the responsibility of the three countries for the management, organisation, training and funding of the projects, the project management occurs at two levels: between the Baltic states themselves and between the Baltic states and the supporting states:

In 1999, the Defence Ministers established the Baltic Management Group, responsible for co-ordinating issues of mutual concern, preparing joint plans and decisions, and facilitating the national implementation and co-ordination of international support. On the side of the Baltic states, the initiative in each project rests with the lead nation. The Baltic lead nation for each project acts as the main co-ordinator



Baltic Project Management, Co-ordination and Planning

The legal framework for BALTBAT, BALTRON and BALTNET establishes the Ministerial Committee, a body consisting of the ministers of defence of the Baltic states, which serves as the highest political authority in all of these projects. The committee’s responsibilities include project development, policy guidance and approval of activities.

The highest military authority in the projects is vested in the Military Committee, consisting of the chiefs of defence of the Baltic states. Similar to the Ministerial Committee, a Military Committee is founded for each of the projects. The committees meet and act as one forum.

In order to enhance the implementation and co-ordination of the projects, the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian defence ministers have decided to appoint a lead nation for each of the projects for fixed periods.

between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in issues of mutual interest, and as the point of contact.

Three Baltic military co-ordination groups – one for BALTBAT, one for BALTRON and one for BALTNET – work in support of the Military Committee. The Baltic Management Group and the three military co-ordination groups work in close liaison as they prepare plans, standards and further developments for approval in the Military Committee and the Ministerial Committee.

The management of BALTDEFCOL differs somewhat from the management structure chosen for the other three projects. On the military/specialist level, the Baltic defence structures have established an Education Board tasked with the responsibility of ensuring academic and administrative development and standards. The Education Board consists of representatives of the Baltic states and the college; the supporting states are invited to participate as observers.

Baltic Lead Nations, 2002

Estonia:	BALTBAT
Estonia:	BALTDEFCOL
Latvia:	BALTRON
Lithuania:	BALTNET

Co-ordination between Supporting Countries and the Baltic states - BALTSEA

Bilateral and multilateral support of defence structures in the Baltic states is co-ordinated by the Baltic Security Assistance Forum (BALTSEA), established in 1997.

Multinational steering groups, chaired by the supporting lead nation, have been established for each project, in order to secure the development and co-ordination of the projects.

Supporting Lead Nations

Denmark:	BALTBAT
Germany:	BALTRON
Norway:	BALTNET
Sweden:	BALTDEFCOL

The main task of the steering groups (consisting of representatives of the Baltic defence ministries and supporting nations) is to supervise and have overall control of the multinational programme of assistance. Steering groups co-ordinate international assistance, give guidance, and supervise implementation. Specialised military or technical working groups, responsible for developing detailed aspects of the programme and for reviewing and implementing the project plan, work in support of the steering groups. The BALTSEA Working Group helps to co-ordinate the bilateral assistance to the Baltic states. It supports the work of the BALTSEA Steering Group.

The Baltification process will most likely eliminate the need for separate steering group meetings in the future. The BALTNET and the BALTRON steering groups have already been formally put “on hold”, and international management of the projects is envisaged as eventually being under the BALTSEA Steering Group domain (with enhanced co-ordination and mutual dialogue).





THE BALTIC BATTALION - BALTBAT

The oldest and probably the best known of the projects – the Baltic Battalion – was established with the purpose of increasing NATO interoperability of the defence forces of the Baltic states, and as a catalyst for generally improving military standards. The BALTBAT initiative also demonstrated the will and ability of the Baltic states to co-operate both among themselves and in a wider multinational environment. The Baltic Battalion has served as an outstanding example of regional co-operation and as a model for further military co-operation.

History of the BALTBAT project

- **November 1993** - The Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Chiefs of Defence announce the idea of a combined peacekeeping unit;
- **September 1994** - The Prime Ministers of the Baltic states sign the first agreement on the formation of a Baltic peacekeeping unit (BALTBAT). Baltic Defence Ministers sign an arrangement with the supporting states, setting out the first project plan and appointing Denmark as the lead nation in the international co-ordination of the project;
- **January 1996** - BALTBAT Headquarters starts operating in Ādaži, Latvia;
- **December 1997** - Initial BALTBAT training programme ends, and the battalion is declared ready for participation in peacekeeping missions; the Baltic Ministers of Defence sign a trilateral agreement, which establishes the principles of command and control, financing and participation in international operations;
- **October 1998** - BALTBAT contingents begin rotational deployment in the SFOR mission in Bosnia;
- **May 1999** - The Baltic Ministers of Defence sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the operation, administration and funding of BALTBAT;
- **May 2000** - The Baltic Chiefs of Defence sign the Report on BALTBAT Status and Future Development
- **October 2000** - The Baltic Ministers of Defence approve the Report on BALTBAT Status and Future Development;
- **August 2001** - The Baltic Ministers of Defence sign the Memorandum of Understanding on the operation, funding and administration of BALTBAT Headquarters;
- **During 2001** - The Baltic states and supporting countries sign the Memorandum of Understanding concerning co-operation on the further development of the sustainability and deployability of BALTBAT as a multinational unit, and the transfer of management of the project to the Baltic states.



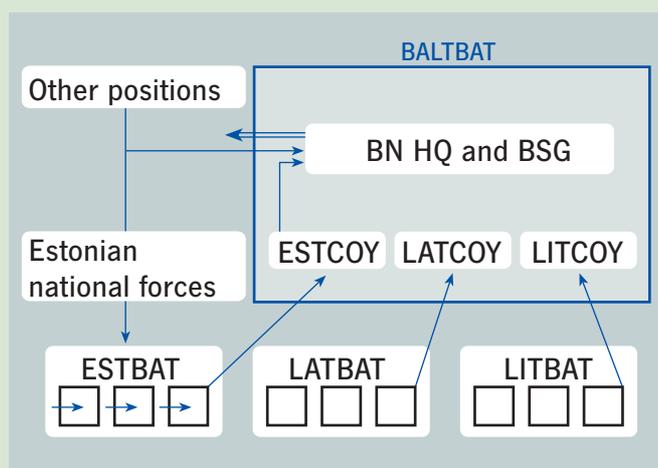
The first achievements in this respect were exemplified by participation of BALTBAT units in the IFOR/SFOR operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon in 1996/1997. Participation of subsequent units (the BALTCON deployments) in the SFOR operation in 1998 - 2000 further expressed the Baltic states' emphasis on the operational side of NATO/Partnership co-operation. At the same time, BALTBAT has supported and contributed to the development of the national defence forces. Development of self-defence capabilities of each of the Baltic states is recognised as one of the major objectives of the project, and is taken forward by channelling BALTBAT standards in training into the whole of the national defence forces, through rotation of personnel and through the use of equipment donated by the supporting countries within the framework of the project.

BALTBAT Structure and Organisation

BALTBAT is comprised of a combined tri-national headquarters, logistics and support units and national infantry companies from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (respectively known as ESTCOY, LATCOY and LITCOY).

Structure of BALTBAT

(Personnel flow using Estonia as an example)



The headquarters in Ādaži, Latvia, and the Baltic Support Group were both established as permanent planning and operating capacities. The Baltic Support Group co-ordinates the logistic support to BALTBAT.

In addition to ESTCOY, Estonia contributes sub-units, such as the signals and reconnaissance platoons of the Headquarters and Support Company. Estonia

also provides personnel to the battalion headquarters. ESTCOY is garrisoned in Paldiski, Estonia; LATCOY in Ādaži, Latvia; and LITCOY in Rukla, Lithuania. Each national company is subordinate to its national authorities until the companies are joined under the battalion commander for a specific mission or exercise. Estonia participates in the project with approximately 230 persons.

The positions of Commander, Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff rotate between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania every two years, ensuring that all three countries are equally involved. The current commander is Major Darius Petryla of the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

Although each company uses its national language internally, the command and communication language of the battalion, as well as the working language of the multinational units, is English.

BALTBAT Training and Deployment

International support of the BALTBAT project has been substantial, with contributions in the form of equipment as well as supporting personnel for the training and education of units. Most of BALTBAT inventory – from soldiers' personal gear to mortars and anti-tank weapons – represents equipment and armament donated by other countries.

An important element of the international support to the BALTBAT project is the aid rendered through the BALTBAT Training Team (BTT), which consists of instructors from supporting states. The main objective of the BTT is to train the trainers, meaning to found a self-sufficient and sustainable training programme that can be maintained by the Baltic training units. In September 2001, three Baltic officers were appointed as "shadow BTT" to gain experience and to provide a brigade framework for the battalion after 2002, when international support to the project is scheduled to end. The BTT is primarily located together with the BALTBAT headquarters in Ādaži, but trainers are also working in Paldiski and Rukla.

The majority of the training takes place at national training centres established in each of the three Baltic states, but units also receive training through short- and long-term courses abroad. Basic training is conducted both according to national standards and mutually agreed training standards.

BALTBAT personnel have frequently participated in various exercises organised within the framework



of NATO's PFP initiative. Among them, Baltic Challenge (1996-1998) is the largest multinational exercise ever held on Baltic soil. The BALTBAT Annual Activity Plan and the Annual Training Directive provide the basis for the training activities. In order to test BALTBAT's mission readiness in 2002, these activities will include a series of Command Post Exercises, and two Field Training Exercises (STRONG RESOLVE in Poland and BALTIC EAGLE 2002 in Estonia).

Operational Capability and Deployments

The initial phase of establishing BALTBAT as a peacekeeping battalion was concluded in December 1997 with the Field Training Exercise (FTX) BALTIC TRIAL II, where BALTBAT capabilities were evaluated. Evaluators confirmed BALTBAT as capable of undertaking deployment to conventional peacekeeping missions in a non-confrontational environment.

The development of BALTBAT from a peacekeeping structure to that of an infantry battalion capable of Peace Support Operations was conducted successfully by the end of 2000 as the various sub-units and elements returned from deployment to SFOR.

In 2001 BALTBAT was rated as capable of participation in conflict prevention, traditional peacekeeping operations, peace enforcement operations and execution of humanitarian aid. According to Initial Partnership Goal L0041, BALTBAT should be prepared by the end of 2005 to move within 30 days to fulfil peace support operations when directed by a competent authority. Decisions

to deploy the battalion to an international mission are adopted by consensus among Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The Future of BALTBAT

In May 2000, the Baltic chiefs of defence signed the Report on BALTBAT Status and Future Development. According to the Development Plan, the aim is to:

- Further integrate the skills and knowledge acquired through training and deployment into the national defence structures;
- Ensure full support of the battalion (in terms of management, personnel, logistics, equipment and funding);
- Enhance the battalions' deployment capability.

These aims should be achieved progressively during the mid-term period (2001-2005).

In particular, the development plan foresees the formation of three national battalions – ESTBAT, LATBAT and LITBAT. This will provide the national capacity to sustain BALTBAT through the provision of sufficient numbers of trained personnel. The composition of the national battalions (in structure, manning and equipment) will cover the organisation of BALTBAT. They will also provide uniformity in training, equipment and weapons in order to maximise interoperability. The rotation of personnel into and out of BALTBAT will enable the BALTBAT experience to be disseminated to national units.



Estonia and the BALTBAT Project

The development plans for three national battalions – ESTBAT, LATBAT and LITBAT were completed in late 2000/early 2001. National plans to organize and equip national battalions are coordinated and implemented, subject to continuous external assistance. As of January 2001, each country maintains one infantry company at the agreed readiness level. Each national battalion has an appointed coordinating nation for its assistance: ESTBAT – Finland; LATBAT – Sweden; LITBAT – Denmark.

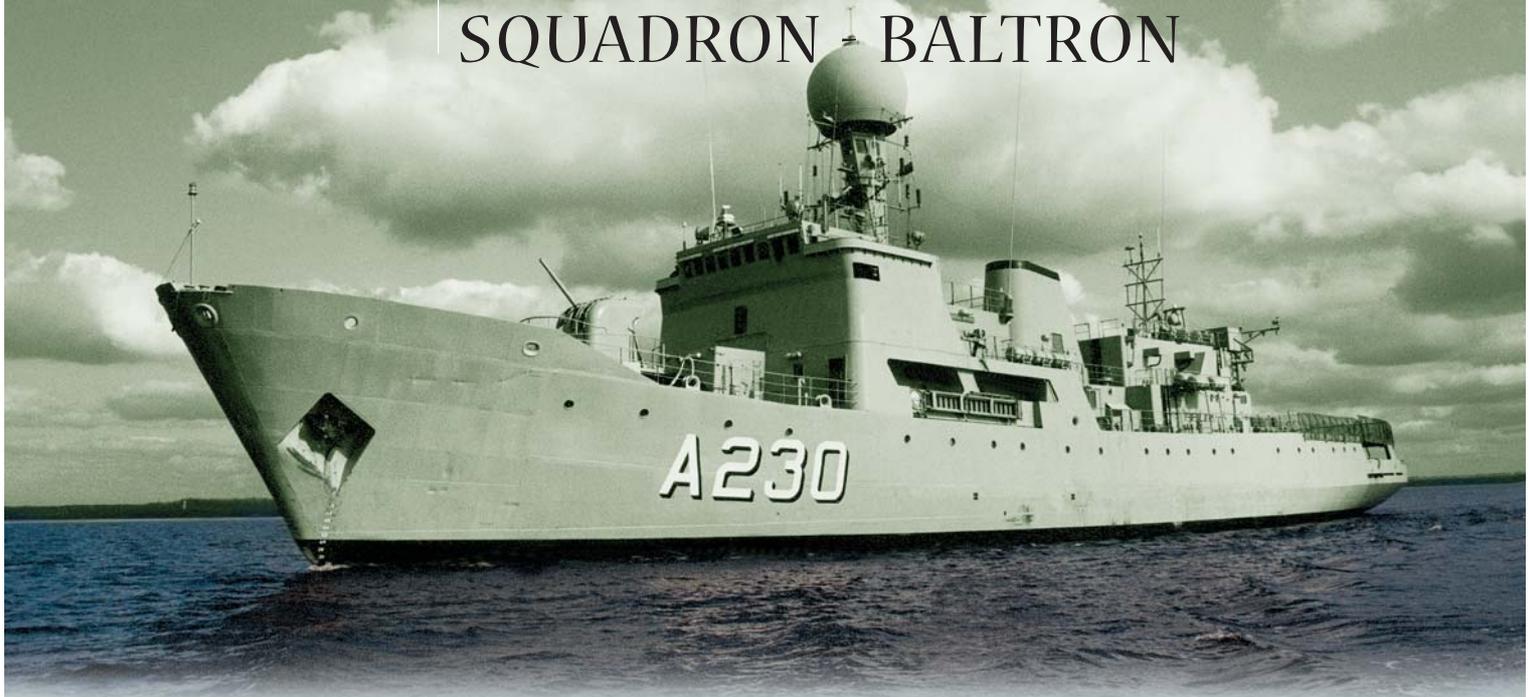
The Estonian Battalion (Scout battalion) was formally established by Estonian government decree on 29 March 2001. The goal of the Estonian rapid reaction battalion is firstly to sustain BALTBAT and to contribute to the national defence system; as well as to contribute to the EU Headline Goal and to be ready for collective self-defence operations under the Washington Treaty (Article V) and PSO tasks. ESTBAT will be developed and located at the Estonian Peace Operations Centre in Paldiski, and will be fully operational by the end of 2005.

Furthermore, the BALTBAT project has demanded rapid development of the national framework: the Estonian Peace Operations Centre (EPOC) in Paldiski. The centre has currently reached a level where, for example, a military police platoon for deployment in Kosovo is being fully prepared and trained at the EPOC and equipped by Estonia. Estonia has taken this task independently. This will be the fifth platoon to participate in the KFOR mission; this continuity in involvement reflects Estonia's political commitment and demonstrates the credibility of its military training and personnel.





THE BALTIC NAVAL SQUADRON - BALTRON



*From May 2001 the flagship of Estonian Navy **ENS Admiral Pitka** acts as a command and support platform for BALTRON.*

The BALTRON project is aimed at promoting co-operation, mutual understanding and interoperability between the Baltic navies and providing the Baltic states with a maritime force capable of participation in NATO-led peace operations. The main military objective for BALTRON is to maintain three mine countermeasures (MCM) ships and a command and support ship at constant readiness for participation in national and international MCM operations.

BALTRON consists of the squadron itself, training centres and management structures.

BALTRON Structure and Organisation

The squadron consists of ships and staff assigned to it by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on a rotational basis. Normally, the ships are assigned to BALTRON for no less than six months, personnel for periods of one year. Currently, one minesweeper, one command and support ship, and two mine hunters are assigned to the squadron.

The BALTRON project currently includes Communications, MCM and Diving Training Centres (TC). The Communications TC has been based in Tallinn, Estonia since 1998; MCM and Diving TCs, both located in Liepāja, Latvia, were established in 2001.

The command and communication language of the squadron is English; BALTRON activities are carried out in adherence with the relevant NATO/PfP procedures and standards (EXTACs, STANAGs).

BALTRON staff positions rotate between the nations in order to distribute the experience to all three navies. Lieutenant Commander Igor Schvede of the Estonian Navy was assigned as COMBALTRON in July 2001. The rotation schedule stipulates that an officer of the Lithuanian Navy will assume the position of COMBALTRON in August 2002.

History of the BALTRON project

- **1995** - Start of intensive co-operation between Baltic navies. First trilateral Baltic naval exercise “Amber Sea 95”. The idea to establish a combined Baltic naval unit for mine countermeasures is born.
- **December 1996** - Start of the practical preparations for the establishment of BALTRON. Seminar on the establishment of BALTRON takes place in Vilnius, Lithuania.
- **February 1997** - Germany takes the lead in the international co-ordination of the project. First meetings of the multinational BALTRON Steering Group and Naval Working Group. The Baltic Ministers of Defence decide to establish BALTRON staff nucleus in Estonia.
- **October 1997** - the nucleus of BALTRON Staff starts work in Tallinn, Estonia.
- **May 1998** - BALTRON Communications Training Centre established in Tallinn, Estonia.
- **April 1998** - BALTRON Staff is fully manned in Tallinn. The intergovernmental agreement on the establishment of BALTRON is signed in Riga, Latvia, 16 April 1998.
- **August 1998** - The inauguration ceremony of BALTRON takes place at Naval Base in Tallinn 28 August 1998.
- **September 1998** - BALTRON participates at the “Open Spirit 98” mine counter-measures operation - exercise and at the Baltic naval exercise “Amber Sea 98”
- **September - October 1999** - the Baltic Ministers of Defence sign a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the operation, funding and administration of Baltic Naval Squadron;
- **October 2000** - The capabilities of the squadron are enhanced remarkably with the addition of mine hunters and a support ship. BALTRON’s lead supporting nation Germany donates two Lindau-class mine hunters to Estonia and Lithuania, and one to Latvia. Denmark donates to Estonia Hvidbjørnen-class command and support ship Admiral Pitka.
- **March 2001** - MCM Training Centre (Lindau-class minehunting simulator) is opened in Liepāja, Latvia.
- **September 2001** - Baltic States Diving Training Centre is inaugurated in Liepāja, Latvia.
- **November 2001** - the biggest International MCM operation of the decade in the Baltic Sea region - MCOPEST 2001 - is successfully conducted in Estonian waters.
- **December 2001** - the Baltic Ministers of Defence sign a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Baltic Naval Training Centres.





**Lieutenant Commander
Igor Schvede,**
*Estonian Navy, is the
BALTRON commander
for 2001/2002.*

International Support

The BALTRON project has attracted wide international support. A Memorandum of Understanding between the ministers of defence of the Baltic states and supporting states was signed in Brussels on 12 June 1998, establishing the terms of support. The multinational Naval Working Group, chaired by Germany, coordinates the international support, which primarily consists of equipment for the Baltic navies and advisors to BALTRON staff.

The Future of BALTRON

The main focus of BALTRON activities for 2002 will be on squadron-level MCM training in order to fulfil the requirements of Partnership Goals.

The long-term objectives for BALTRON are: to be capable of conducting full-scale mine countermeasures operations, and participation in Peace Support Operations (PSO). To that end, the squadron shall be comprised of a Squadron Staff, a Command Ship, and at least three mine countermeasure vessels.

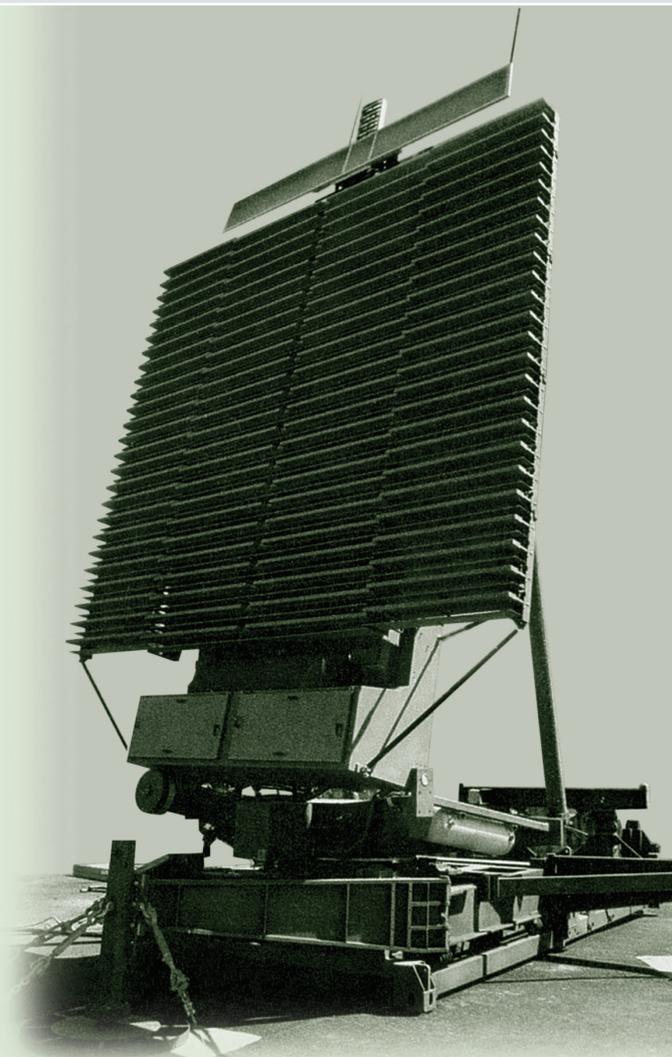
Estonia and the BALTRON Project

Similarly to BALTRON, the Estonian Navy as a whole is focusing on building up mine-countermeasures capabilities. Thus the project provides Estonia with valuable experience and opportunities for training the ships of the Estonian Navy to take part in operations as a part of larger naval task forces.

Estonia has participated actively in the BALTRON project since its inception. Estonia has provided BALTRON staff with on-shore facilities at the Naval Base in Tallinn and also hosts the BALTRON Communications School. In 2001, Estonia participated in BALTRON with a Lindau-class mine hunter, a Frauenlob-class minesweeper, a Hvidbjørnen-class command and support ship, staff officers and clearance divers. Estonia also participates in the management structure (which includes military- and political-level working groups) established to coordinate the activities and development of BALTRON. In the future, Estonia plans to continue participation with MCM vessels, a command and staff ship, and divers.

THE BALTIC AIR SURVEILLANCE NETWORK - BALNET

The Baltic Air Surveillance Network - BALNET - is a wide-ranging project. It is designed to increase the regional air surveillance capability and to improve the efficiency of international co-operation between the civil and military aviation authorities of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It includes acquisition, co-ordination, distribution and display of air surveillance data within the three states. The implementation of the BALNET project is equally aimed at promoting the Baltic states integration into NATO by achieving NATO interoperability and optimising the use of resources.



*In 2002 BALNET system will be greatly enhanced by the installation of an 3D primary surveillance radar **TPS-117** that Estonia procured from Lockheed Martin Overseas Corporation.*

History of the BALNET initiative

- **1994 - 1995** - The Baltic states agree in principle to co-ordinate radar surveillance coverage of their airspace.
- **1996** - The Regional Airspace Initiative sponsored by the United States is extended from Central Europe to the Baltic states.
- **Spring 1997** - The BALNET Steering Group and the Technical Sub-Group are established under Norwegian chairmanship.
- **April 1997** - The Baltic Ministers of Defence decide to locate the Regional Airspace Surveillance Co-ordination Centre (RASCC) in Karmelava, Lithuania.
- **End 1997** - US Congress approves to sponsor the funding for establishing air surveillance centres in the Baltic states.
- **April 1998** - The Baltic Ministers of Defence sign an agreement on the establishment of BALNET (16 April 1998).
- **1999 - 2000** - Each Baltic state establishes its own national Air Sovereignty Operations Centre (ASOC) within the BALNET project. The national centres receive, display and distribute data from the RASCC.
- **6 June 2000** - RASCC inauguration ceremony in Karmelava, Lithuania.
- **11 October 2000** - Estonian ASOC inauguration ceremony.
- **December 2000** - The Chiefs of Defence of the three states sign an order to begin 24-hour air surveillance operations from 1 January 2001.
- **December 2000** - The Ministers of Defence of the three states sign the BALNET Further Development Plan, which provides political guidance for the system's evolution.



BALTNET is a part of the wider international effort to develop air surveillance and air traffic management capabilities in Central and Eastern Europe, a unique combination of the efforts of many nations.

BALTNET System

The intergovernmental agreement on the establishment of BALTNET, signed in Riga on 16 April 1998, established the framework of the system. Implementation of the BALTNET project follows the recommendations of the US Regional Airspace Initiative (RAI) Study. For the purpose of operating BALTNET, a Regional Airspace Surveillance Coordination Centre (RASCC), located in Lithuania, was established. RASCC is jointly manned and managed by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. RASCC staff receives, processes and displays data from primary and secondary radars and flight plans in the Baltic states; RASCC staff initiates and coordinates tracking and identification of all aircraft in radar coverage, and coordinates the exchange of regional information with third parties. The integrated information makes it possible to view, identify and monitor air traffic across the entire region.

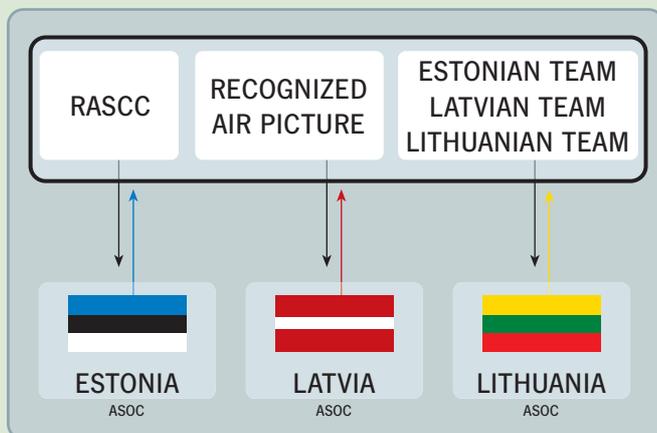
In addition to RASCC, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have each established their own national air surveillance centres, the ASOCs. They receive a common, integrated air picture from RASCC. The national centres are also utilised to process and display radar data from other national radars and surveillance resources. While the coordination of operations is centralised in RASCC, all air sovereignty functions are performed by the national authorities of each of the three Baltic states.

NATO standards and procedures are applied in the BALTNET system to the largest extent possible with the aim of achieving full interoperability and compatibility with and integration into relevant NATO systems. Radar data provided to BALTNET remains national property of the providing nation but BALTNET assets can be used for an exchange of recognised air picture with NATO and/or with individual countries.

To avoid unnecessary multiple radar coverage and to support the BALTNET project, the Baltic states are working together in planning the placement of radar sensors in the three states.



**Scheme about BALTNET System :
RASCC and National Nodes**



In addition to being the co-location of the RASCC and the Lithuanian national centre, the Karmelava site also serves as the BALTNET Training Centre (BTC). The BTC infrastructure, containing administrative personnel offices, two classrooms, a dining hall, the guards room, a student residence hall and officers' club, is a donation from the Royal Norwegian Air Force. The BTC will be used for air surveillance operations training and technical specialists training. Plans are underway to turn the BTC into a central training base for Eastern and Central European countries.

International Support for the Project:

The BALTNET Steering Group and Technical Sub-Group have been formed to coordinate the efforts of various nations assisting Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the establishment of the air surveillance system. Both groups operate under the chairmanship of Norway. The international support involves training, provision of equipment and expertise.

The RASCC was established as a result of the US Regional Airspace Initiative study, placing the cornerstone for the launch of BALTNET. The US Government has allocated funds for the procurement of equipment for the establishment of the RASCC and the national centres (ASOCs). The US Government contracted Lockheed Martin Company for the installation of the centres. Norway is providing assistance in the establishment of the communications links between RASCC and the national centres.

Supporting states have also assisted in the complex work of development of the concept of operations and standard operating procedures for the BALTNET system.

The Baltic states are working closely with NATO's Committee for European Airspace Co-ordination, the NATO Air Defence Committee and the NATO C3 agency in air surveillance and air defence matters.



Estonian ASOC in Ämari.



Estonia and the BALTNET Project

The BALTNET project is included in the list of Estonia's strategic priorities as an important step toward achieving full air space control. The BALTNET project is the main short-term priority in the development of the Estonian Air Force. The establishment of the Estonian national air surveillance system is done in parallel with the development of BALTNET.

Development of the national surveillance system is carried out in co-operation between civil and military authorities. The system is a part of BALTNET, and receives, integrates and supplies data to all involved national agencies (Air Force, Civil Air Traffic Control, Border Guard, Vessel Traffic Control). As Estonia currently does not operate military air surveillance radars, civilian air traffic control radars are providing data to the BALTNET system. However, the procurement of modern military surveillance radars has been initiated, and modern, primary radar will be in function by the beginning of year 2003.

The Future of BALTNET

Future plans for BALTNET and the RASCC envisage further development and integration. In the nearest future, BALTNET should become fully operational: RASCC and ASOC-s will execute air surveillance operations and receive radar information from all primary and secondary surveillance radars assigned to BALTNET on a 24-hour basis (from each national centre); RASCC will be provided with flight plan information electronically; and RASCC and ASOC-s duty crews will meet all manning requirements.

In order to meet this criterion, the training of personnel for BALTNET duties is the number one priority for the nearest future (16 officers and non-commissioned officers completed respective training in 2001). Another important step is linking BALTNET with the NATO Integrated Air Defence System (NATINADS). Dialogue for putting the political framework in place has already begun.

Other priorities of the BALTNET system include a successfully operating BALTNET Training Centre and continued development of a modern air surveillance system, which will be greatly enhanced by the procurement of modern 3D primary surveillance sensors.





THE BALTIC DEFENCE COLLEGE- BALTDEFCOL

The Baltic Defence College, founded in 1998, is the first combined institution for military education in the Baltic states, helping to create a common background for the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian officers corps. The college's main objective is to establish and continuously improve the training and development of senior staff officers of the defence forces of the Baltic states. The founding of BALTDEFCOL has been a most effective way to educate NATO-interoperable staff-level officers in the Baltic countries.

The college ensures the quick development of a pool of qualified officers capable of leading the future development of the defence structures. At BALTDEFCOL, mid-career officers receive education according to NATO standards and procedures; their training also involves the aspects deriving from the specific defence conditions of the individual countries.

The activities and courses conducted by the Baltic Defence College take into consideration the general political and geographical conditions, national defence tasks and defence concepts of the Baltic states. The courses emphasise democratic principles of leadership, and assist in the preparation of officers for work according to PfP and NATO procedures and formats.

International Support

BALTDEFCOL has received substantial international support during the first years of its operation to ensure the highest possible quality of education. The international support is based on the “Memorandum of Understanding concerning co-operation in the establishment, operation, administration and initial funding and secondment of staff to a Baltic Defence College in the Republic of Estonia”, signed in Brussels on 12 June 1998.

The largest part of that support has come from Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. In addition, other states, (Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Poland, the UK and the USA) have also supported the college. International support to the college ranges from donating equipment and finances to hosting study tours and providing external lecturers.

The key part of the support, however, is the secondment of experts to the college staff. BALTDEFCOL teaching staff includes representatives from 12 states, including nine supporting states. The first commandant of the college is Brigadier General Michael H. Clemmesen (Danish Army). This combination of nations that includes NATO member states as well as non-aligned countries with total defence traditions has brought together a unique pool of international experience.



*Estonian Chief of Defence **Rear Admiral Tarmo Kõuts**, Estonian Minister of Defence **Mr. Jüri Luik** and the Commandant of the Baltic Defence College **BG Michael Clemmesen** at the graduation ceremony of the second Senior Staff Course in June 2001.*

History of the BALTDEFCOL project

- **1992** - the Baltic Defence Ministers agree in principle that Baltic states would co-operate in the fields of officer and specialist training.
- **Spring 1997** - start of the actual development of the idea to establish an educational institution for senior staff training for the officers of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.
- **June 1997** - the Nordic and Baltic Defence Ministers decide at their meeting in Saaremaa, Estonia, to establish the Baltic Defence College. Sweden takes lead in the international co-ordination and development of the project.
- **Second half of 1997** - the Baltic states agree on the educational objectives for the staff training and decide to locate the college in Tartu, Estonia. Several other states follow the Nordic states and join to support the project.
- **12 June 1998** - the agreement between the Baltic states establishing BALTDEFCOL and a Memorandum of Understanding with supporting states concerning support to and initial operation of the college are signed in Brussels.
- **September 1998** - the core of BALTDEFCOL staff starts working in Tartu.
- **January 1999** - BALTDEFCOL takes over the renovated college infrastructure in the former Defence League building.
- **25 February 1999** - the official inauguration of BALTDEFCOL.
- **August 1999** - 32 students of the first Senior Staff Course of the BALTDEFCOL start their studies.
- **June 2000** - a very high-level graduation ceremony of the first Senior Staff Course. Among others the President of Estonia, the Defence Ministers of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden and Hungary and several Chiefs of Defence attended.
- **August 2000** - 37 students of the second Senior Staff Course start their studies.
- **February 2001** - 14 students of the first Civil Servants Course start their studies.
- **June 2001** - the graduation ceremony of the second Senior Staff Course.
- **August 2001** - the start of the first Colonel's Course and the third Senior Staff Course.
- **October 2001** - the inauguration ceremony of BALTDEFCOL's new study area.
- **November 2001** - the graduation ceremony of the first Civil Servants Course in Riga.
- **January 2002** - the first step of the Baltification process: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania take over 1/3 of the total budget.



Defence Secretary of the United Kingdom, the current Secretary General of NATO
Lord George Robertson
at the inauguration ceremony of the Baltic Defence College in 1999.

BALTDEFCOL Courses

As the official and working language at BALTDEFCOL is English, the courses also develop students' fluency in English as a daily working language.

All of the courses have taken local conditions into account, while at the same time reflecting the best that the visiting professors countries can offer - expertise in NATO procedures and formats. NATO interoperability is the key theme.

Senior Staff Course

The 11-month Senior Staff Course has been tailored for the professional and personal development of mid-career senior staff officers. It covers the subjects of Operations and Tactics, Logistics, Political Science and Strategy, Staff Duties, Management and Administration, Total Defence and Military Technology. The course puts a clear emphasis on Baltic states' defence problems and conditions. In this way it differs from any other staff training course currently offered to Baltic military personnel. Upon completing the course, the officers will be prepared to serve at the leading posts at military region and infantry brigade levels. They will also be ready to serve in policy-making and long-term planning staff officer positions in the staffs and ministries of defence. The graduates will be prepared to work as teachers and directors of national officer training,

and they will be qualified for work in international staffs. BALTDEFCOL will also provide educated officers to the other Baltic defence co-operation projects.

Civil Servants Course

The first Civil Servants Course with 14 students (8 from Estonia, 6 from Latvia) started in February 2001. The Civil Servants Course aims to improve civil servants' knowledge about the civil-military relationship, defence planning, and total defence. The 10-week course is divided between class lectures (including some joint lessons with the Senior Staff Course) and distance learning. The 2002/2003 Civil Servants Course will focus on the preparation of civil servants for working with NATO issues and structures in NATO Headquarters or in their home MoD or MFA.

Colonel's Course

In addition to the Senior Staff Course and the Civil Servants Course, the college offered the first Colonel's Course in 2001/2002. This course provides advanced education for field grade officers (senior majors to colonels), refining their ability to lead units, to conduct analysis and staff work. The course, which runs parallel with the Senior Staff Course, currently has six students, who possess clear leadership and management potential.

Each Baltic state has sent 8-10 students to each of



The 2001/2002 teaching staff of BALTDEFCOL :

Denmark - Commandant, Strategy and Political Science, Air/Air Defence Operations, Associate Professor Administration

Sweden - Course Director/Deputy Commandant, Military Engineering, Administration

Norway - Fire Support, Naval Operations

Finland - Head of Tactics and Logistics

France - Logistics

Germany - NATO Tactics

Switzerland - Total Defence

UK - Tactical Staff organisation/Procedures and Signals

USA - Military Technology

Estonia - Assistant Professor Estonian Administration

Latvia - Assistant Professor Latvian Administration

Lithuania - Assistant Professor Lithuanian Administration

the first three Senior Staff Courses. Students from supporting states and other countries that have taken interest in the courses have also attended BALTDEFCOL. The college has developed a broad network of foreign relations. Of the 41 students enrolled in the third Senior Staff Course, 13 are from countries outside of the Baltic states.

BALTDEFCOL courses and activities are directed and supervised by two international bodies: the BALTDEFCOL Board and the Education Board.

The BALTDEFCOL Board consists of the representatives of all states participating in the project. The Board is responsible for the overall direction of the college and makes all major decisions on the development of the project. Sweden chairs the Board.

The Education Board consists of the representatives of the Baltic states and the college, and is responsible for facilitating close co-operation in the development of BALTDEFCOL courses, student administration and activities. The supporting states are invited to participate in the Education Board as observers.

Estonia and BALTDEFCOL

Estonia is the host nation of BALTDEFCOL. The college is located in the historical university town of Tartu. BALTDEFCOL is housed in the same building as the Estonian national officers' school. One wing of the building (approximately 2000 m²) has been made available exclusively for the use of the college. Before the opening of BALTDEFCOL, Estonia made considerable investments by allocating approximately half of the total 1998 defence budget infrastructure investments for the refurbishment of the building. In addition, the Estonian Ministry of

Defence purchased the three-star Taru Hotel for use as the BALTDEFCOL student residence. Estonia also gives logistic and administrative assistance to the college.

BALTDEFCOL is a very important link in the overall military educational and training system in Estonia. Through BALTDEFCOL, the Estonian officers corps receives training tailored to Estonian wishes and needs.

Estonia has posted graduates of the college in staff positions at the Defence Staff, the Defence Regions Staffs, in command and staff positions in battalion staffs, and in Partnership Staff Elements in various NATO Military Headquarters.

Future Development of the BALTDEFCOL Project

The third Senior Staff Course and the first Colonel's Course of the Baltic Defence College graduate on 21 June 2002.

The initial international programme of support is intended to assist the Baltic states in the development of BALTDEFCOL over a period of five years. Work on the development of a Baltification plan started in January 2001, and an outlined Long-Term Plan covering all areas (activities, budget, management, manning) was approved at the Baltic Management Group meeting in March 2001. The College Board approved the Long-Term Plan for the development of the college in June 2001. The length and progress of the actual Baltification process will depend on a number of factors, including the availability of suitable Baltic staff. The process of filling staff positions with Baltic staff must be considered very thoroughly, ensuring the overall high standard of the BALTDEFCOL education.

OTHER PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

In addition to the four long-term projects detailed in the sections above, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are working closely with one another and supporting states on numerous other projects and initiatives in various defence-related fields. This co-operation also involves regular meetings for the purpose of sharing information and optimising the use of resources (including possible joint procurements). Planned collaboration on the near horizon includes meetings between Baltic defence planners, logistics specialists, legal experts and military environmental specialists. Regular meetings between the chiefs of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian national guards will also continue. The following ad hoc projects and initiatives should be included in the general picture of Baltic military co-operation:

BALTCCIS

A Baltic Command, Control and Information System project, led by the German Air Force and designed by the German Air Force Programming Centre. BALTCCIS plays an important role in the development of modern staff area C3 functionality at the national levels of all three Baltic states. One of the requirements of the BALTCCIS project is to achieve full NATO C3 compatibility, i.e. implementing NATO message formats and IT security standards. The main BALTCCIS aim is to integrate all available naval and air surveillance data as well as data from various agencies to the national JOC-s enabling the Baltic states to monitor the movement and status of troops and different types of vehicles within and around their borders. This information gives the basis for up-to-date status reports, most essential for decision-makers, especially during the operations. BALTCCIS should be fully operational by the end of 2003.

BALTPERS

A project to create a modern system for managing conscript services in the Baltic states. The project started in 1996 when the Swedish Government gave the Swedish National Service Administration (Pliktverket) the task of working with the Latvian,

Lithuanian and Estonian Ministries of Defence in this specific area of expertise. The project is aimed at developing a national system for each of the Baltic states, and will serve not only the military forces but also civilian units that are tasked in case of readiness or mobilisation. In September 1999, the Swedish National Service Administration signed an agreement with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which states that the four countries will continue their cooperation to create an administrative system for management of war-assignment and mobilisation of personnel within the total defence system. The project shall be finished in December 2002.

BALTMED

A project initiated by the Swedish Armed Forces Medical Centre with the purpose of providing the units of the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF) medical service with medical equipment and medical supplies that are in use in the Swedish Armed Forces. BALTMED also provides the necessary professional training for the medical personnel of the EDF. The launch of the BALTMED project can be put at Autumn 2000, with a training course for military doctors and nurses given at the Battalion Military Medical Service Centre in Ādaži, Latvia. Each of the Baltic states received one battalion aid station and one company aid station. A detailed plan of further medical assistance has been approved for 2004-2005. Close co-operation will be continued in 2004-2005 and will include procurements (for lower levels through battalion level) as well as training opportunities.





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